THE EARLE OF STRAFFORDS LETTER TO HIS MOST EXCELLENT MAIESTIE. DATED FROM THE TOWER.

4. May. 1641.

Anno Domini. 1641.

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The Earle of STRAFFORDS Letter, to his most Excellent Majestie, dated from the Tower. 4. May. 1641.

May it please your sacred Majestie,

IT hath beene my greatest griefe in all these troubles, to be taken as a person which should endevour to represent, and set things amisse betweene your Majestie and your people; and to give Counsells tending to the disquiet of the three Kingdomes.

Most true it is, that this mine owne private Condition considered, it had beene a great madnesse, since through your gratious favour I was so provided, as not to bipest in any kind to mend my fortune, or please my mind more, then by resting where your Counsellors hands had placed mee.

Nay, it is most mightily mistaken, for unto your Majesty it is well knowne, my poore, and humble advises concluded still in this, That your Majestie and your people could never be happie, till there were a right understanding betwixt you and them: no other meanes to effect, and settle this happinesse, but by the Councell, and assent of the Parliament; or to prevent the growing Evills upon this state but by intirely putting your selfe in the last resort, upon the loyalty, and good affections of your English subjects.

Yet such is my misfortune, this truth findeth little credit, the contrary seemeth generally to be beleeved, and my selfe reputed, as some thing of seperation betweene you, and your people; under a heavyer censure then which I am perswaded no Gentleman can suffer.

Now, I understand the minds of men are more incensed against mee, notwithstanding your Majestie hath declared, that in your princely opinion, I am not guilty of treason, nor are you satisfied in your conscience to passe the Bill.

This bringeth me into a very great streight, there is before me the ruine of my Children, and family, hitherto untouched, in all the branches of it with any foule Crimes. Here is before mee the many ills, which may befall your sacred person, and the whole kingdome, should your selfe, and Parliament part lesse

satisfied one with the other, then is necessary for the preservation both of King, and people. Here are before mee the things most valued most feared, by mortall man, *Life*, or *Death*.

To say Sir, that there hath not beene a strife in mee, were to make mee lesse man, then God knoweth, mine infirmities give me. And to call a destruction upon my selfe, and yong Children, where the intentions of my heart, at least have been innocent of this great offence) may be beleived, will find no easie consent from flesh and blood.

But with much sadnesse, I am come to a resolution, of that which I take to be best becoming me, to looke upon that which is most principall in it selfe; which doubtlesse is the prosperity of your sacred person, and the common wealth, infinitly before any private mans interest.

And therefore in few words, as I put my selfe wholy upon the honour, and justice of my Peeres so clearely, as to beseech your Majestie might please to have spared that declaration of yours on Saturday last, and intirely to have left me to their Lordships; so now, to set your Majesties conscience at liberty I doe most humbly beseech your Majestie, in prevention of mistakes which may happen, by your refusall, to passe this Bill; And by this meanes remove (praysed be God) I cannot say, this accursed, (but I confesse) this unfortunate thing

forth of the way, towards that blessed agreement, which God I trust, shall ever establish betweene you, and your subjects.

So my consent shall more acquit you herein to God, then all the world can doe besides. For unwilling man there is no injury done. And as by Gods grace, I forgive all the world with a calmenesse and meeknesse of infinite Contentment to my dislodging soule; So sir, to you can I give the life of this world, with all the thereafulnesse I imaginable; in the just acknowledgement of your exceeding favours. And onely begge that in your goodnesse, you would vouchsafe to cast your gracious regard upon my poore Soone, and his three Sisters, lesse, or more, and no otherwise, then as their (in present) unfortunate Father, may hereafter appeare more, or lesse guilty of this death.

God long preserve your Majestie.

Your Majesties most faithfull, and humble Subject, and Servant,

Tower
4. May 1641. STRAFFORD.

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